

Dear Pat:

Thanks for writing, and for the kind opening. I appreciate both. And although I have some concerns about the proposal we're talking about, I think it goes too far to say that I consider it at threat. Potential problem, maybe.

The proposal actually first reached me from Harold Varmus. We've had a subsequent conversation, in which I told him that we would look carefully at the proposal. I expressed to him some of the concerns I briefly mentioned to Susan. Our membership and circulation folks have always been

cautious about giving away back papers -- recent ones, anyhow. As for me, I am unpersuaded as to whether "post after 6 months" would do any economic harm. Harold said: "make them supply data." I have pushed them on that, though of course there may not be an available history that would give us an 'experiment of nature.'

Once one passes that question, there's also the matter of entry route. Obviously Science has an electronic site that offers a number of products and services to members, and it would be nice if to get our papers people had to pass through it.

Finally: who runs the thing? I know HighWire and perhaps others are pondering portals. I know you have discussed these issues with John Sack. Surely there are technical issues here that you and John are much better equipped to work out than I.

But I do have one concern: I mistrust the wisdom of establishing any scientific information monopoly in the federal government. So I have difficulty with the idea that PubMedCentral should be the place.

Cheers

Don

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